



# REMARKS ON THE PROCESS OF INSTITUTIONALISATION OF MENDICANT ORDERS AND THEIR ROLE IN PASTORAL WORK BASED ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE DOMINION OF THE TEUTONIC ORDER IN PRUSSIA FROM THE 13<sup>th</sup> TO THE BEGINNING OF THE 16<sup>th</sup> CENTURY

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## ABSTRACT

The conditions and the environment of the mendicant religious orders (Dominicans, Franciscan Conventuals, Franciscan Observants, Carmelites, and Augustinians) in the holdings of the Teutonic Order in Prussia differed from those in Western Europe. In newly built castles and newly founded cities, German and Polish-speaking communities predominated; while Prussians, unfamiliar with the basics of Christianity, prevailed in rural territories. The network of parish churches declined towards the eastern and northern boundaries of the state. Therefore, the mendicant orders operated there on a different model. An examination of its characteristics is carried out by means of an analysis of the stages, development and dynamics of the settlement of mendicant orders in Prussia. An attempt is made to identify the organisation of their provision and the supporting milieu. Particular attention is paid to the impact of mendicant orders on the deepening of the faith of the local Prussian population in the eastern part of the Teutonic Order's holdings.

KEY WORDS: Teutonic Order, Prussia, mendicant orders, Dominicans, Christianisation, Prussians, monks.

## ANOTACIJA

Elgetaujančių vienuolijų (dominikonų, pranciškonų konventualų, pranciškonų observantų, karmelitų, augustijonų) pastoracinės veiklos sąlygos ir aplinka Vokiečių ordino valdose Prūsijoje buvo skirtingos nei Vakarų Europoje. Naujai pastatytose pilyse, įkurtuose miestuose dominavo vokiškai ir lenkiškai kalbančios bendruomenės, o kaimo vietovėse – menkai susipažinę su krikščionybės pagrindais prūsai. Judant į valstybės rytinius ir šiaurinius pakraščius, parapinių bažnyčių tinklas menkėjo. Todėl čia elgetaujančios vienuolijos savo veiklą grindė kitokiu modeliu. Tiriant jo bruožus, nagrinėjami elgetaujančių vienuolijų kūrimosi Prūsijoje etapai, plėtra ir dinamika. Aiškinamasi, kaip buvo organizuotas aprūpinimas, kokia buvo palaikančioji terpė. Ypatingas dėmesys skiriamas elgetaujančių vienuolijų įtakai gilinant vietinių prūsų gyventojų tikėjimą rytinėje Vokiečių ordino valdų dalyje.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: Vokiečių ordinas, Prūsija, elgetaujančios vienuolijos, dominikonai, christianizacija, prūsai, vienuoliai.

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One of the reasons for the establishment of the first mendicant orders (Dominicans and Franciscans) at the beginning of the 13th century was the need to provide the pastoral guidance of the Church to the rapidly growing populations of cities in Western Europe. This meant mainly villagers arriving in cities, who settled near and outside the city walls of new urban centres. The new model of an order did away with the former paradigm of monastic life, situated far away from large centres of population, and reached parishioners directly, who mostly belonged to the lower strata of city communities. This way, a new structure appeared in the already established structure of city parishes: the mendicant friary, which soon turned out to be competition for them.<sup>1</sup> And the area of the pastoral activities of the friary did not end within the boundaries of the city as such; in fact, it reached further out, enveloping the entire catchment area, and therefore also the whole country.<sup>2</sup> We will present here the general conditions for the institutionalisation of mendicant friaries in the state run by the Teutonic Order in Prussia<sup>3</sup> and their activity in pastoral work directed at the population inhabiting the catchment area, with particular attention given to the native Prussian people in the eastern part of the country.<sup>4</sup>

The process of the institutionalisation of mendicant orders in the state run by the Teutonic Order in Prussia progressed under fundamentally different conditions to those in Western Europe. No established city structures were developed in these territories in the 13th century, with the exception of Gdańsk Pomerania, which was incorporated into the Teutonic state after 1308. The lands of newly conquered pagan Prussia were extensively settled soon after their subordination. From the very beginning, not only were castles built there, which were important for maintaining military authority, but also whole cities were founded in these locations. Having seized the area of Chełmno/Culm, and then the lands situated to the east of the Vistula and along the Vistula Lagoon, the Teutonic knights successively founded Chełmno/Culm, Toruń/Thorn and Elbląg/Elbing, and a little later Królewiec/Königsberg (now the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad), all of which, in addition to Braniewo/Braunsberg which belonged to the Warmia/Ermland bishops, soon be-

<sup>1</sup> HINNEBUSCH, W.A. *The History of the Dominican Order. Origins and Growth to 1500*. Vol. 1. New York, 1966, pp. 119-143; MOORMAN, J. R. H. *A History of the Franciscan Order from Its Origins to the Year 1517*. Oxford, 1968, pp. 10-31, 62-74.

<sup>2</sup> KŁOCZOWSKI, J. Klosterkreise in der polnischen Dominikanerprovinz im Mittelalter. In *Vita Religiosa im Mittelalter, Festschrift für Kaspar Elm zum 70. Geburtstag* (Berliner historische Studien, 31). Hrsg. von F. J. FELTEN, N. JASPERT. Berlin, 1999, S. 533-542.

<sup>3</sup> Based on the example of the Dominicans, this process is discussed in the paper: KUBICKI, R. Fundacja i implantacja klasztoru dominikańskiego na przykładzie państwa zakonu krzyżackiego w Prusach. In *Studia z dziejów Średniowiecza, Nr. 17*. Red. B. MOŻEJKO, M. SMOLIŃSKI, S. SZYBKOWSKI. Warszawa, 2013, s. 67-88.

<sup>4</sup> About mendicants in this region, see SARNOWSKY, J. Die Dominikaner und Franziskaner im Ordensland Preußen. In *Franciscan Organisation in the Mendicant Context. Formal and informal structures of the friars' lives and ministry in the Middle Ages* (Vita Regularis Ordnungen und Deutungen religiösen Lebens im Mittelalter, Bd. 44). Ed. M. ROBSON, J. RÖHRKASTEN. Berlin, 2010, pp. 43-64; KUBICKI, R. Die Rolle der Bettelorden im Ordensland Preußen. In *Cura animarum, Seelsorge im Deutschordensland des Mittelalters* (Forschungen und Quellen zur Kirchen- und Kulturgeschichte Ostdeutschlands, Bd. 45). Hrsg. von S. SAMERSKI. Köln, Weimar, Wien, 2013, S. 74-91. About the pastoral mission of the Church among the local Prussian population generally, see RADZIWIŃSKI, A. *Chryścianizacja i ewangelizacja Prusów*. Toruń, 2008.

came the largest urban centres in Prussia. In these circumstances, the establishment of the first Dominican and Franciscan friaries in these regions did not complement the already existing parish network.<sup>5</sup> Instead, it set mission goals before them in areas inhabited by pagans, and defined the supporting function for newly formed diocesan structures (bishoprics and parishes). This objective was at first to be accomplished by the Dominicans. According to the plan implemented by Wilhelm of Modena, the papal legate, it was assumed that they would become the heads of the new dioceses. By Wilhelm's decision of 29 July 1243, four dioceses were set up in the Teutonic State (Chełmno, Pomesania, Sambia/Samland and Warmia/Ermland). Apart from the Teutonic priest Henricus von Strittberg in Warmia, members of the Dominican order were to become bishops there.<sup>6</sup> Heidenreich became the Bishop of Chełmno/Culm, Ernest was the Bishop of Pomesania, and Tetward was to be the Bishop of Sambia. Unfortunately, he did not receive papal approval, and was replaced in 1252 by a Franciscan, John of Diest.<sup>7</sup> Albert, the Bishop of Pomesania since 1261, and Herman of Cologne/Köln, the Bishop of Sambia since 1275, also belonged to the Franciscans.<sup>8</sup> At a later point in time, decisions on staffing the dioceses were taken by chapters. Because the Teutonic knights had managed to incorporate three of them into their order, they also took control of the election of new bishops. Only in the case of Warmia did they did not succeed in achieving that goal.<sup>9</sup>

## 1. Foundations and institutionalisation of friaries

The first mendicant friary, which in fact was only part of the Teutonic State from the year 1308, was the Dominican friary in Gdańsk/Danzig, established in 1227 by Prince Sviatopolk. It was also the place of origin of the missionary activity to pagan Prussia,

<sup>5</sup> BISKUP, M. Bemerkung zum Siedlungsproblem und den Pfarrbezirken und Ordenspreußen im 14.-15. Jahrhundert. In *Die Rollen der Ritterorden in der Christianisierung und Kolonisierung des Ostseegebietes* (Ordines militares. Colloquia Torunensia Historica, 1). Hrsg. von Z.H. NOWAK. Thorn, 1983, S. 45-48; BISKUP, M. Parafie w państwie krzyżackim. In *Państwo zakonu krzyżackiego w Prusach. Podziały administracyjne i kościelne w XIII-XVI wieku*. Red. Z. H. NOWAK, współpraca R. CZAJA. Toruń, 2000, s. 81-93.

<sup>6</sup> ALTANER, B. *Die Dominikanermision des 13. Jahrhunderts*. Halberschwerdt, 1924, S. 169-176.

<sup>7</sup> ROTH, W. *Die Dominikaner und Franziskaner im Deutsch-Ordensland Preußen bis zum Jahre 1466*. Königsberg, 1918, S. 24; LEMMENS, L. *Geschichte der Franziskanermisionen*. Münster, 1929, S. 50. The election of the aforementioned people as bishops did not mean their practical involvement in the affairs of their diocese. They usually participated in missions far away from Prussia. The data on bishops' residence in their own dioceses and outside them was collected by REH, P. Das Verhältnis des deutschen Ordens zu den preußischen Bischöfen im 13. Jahrhundert. *Zeitschrift des Westpreußischen Geschichtsvereins*, 1896, Nr. 35, S. 101-105.

<sup>8</sup> For information on the first bishops of Prussian dioceses, see RADZIMIŃSKI, A. *Kościół w państwie zakonu krzyżackiego w Prusach 1243-1525*. Malbork, 2006, s. 23-28.

<sup>9</sup> The process of the incorporation of bishops' chapters into the Teutonic Order was presented by RADZIMIŃSKI, A. Z dziejów kształtowania i organizacji kapituł krzyżackich. Inkorporacja pruskich kapituł katedralnych do zakonu krzyżackiego. In *Zakon krzyżacki a społeczeństwo państwa w Prusach* (Roczniki Towarzystwa Naukowego w Toruniu, rocznik 86, zeszyt 3). Red. Z. H. NOWAK. Toruń, 1995, s. 123-135.

where monks preached in Pomesania and the Pasłęk area (Pogezania) in 1231.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, in the Chełmno area and Prussia, the first Dominican and Franciscan friaries founded by the Teutonic Knights were built. The Dominicans built friaries in Chełmno/Culm (1233/36) and Elbląg/Elbing (1239), and the Franciscans in Toruń/Thorn (1239). The second phase of foundations took place at the end of the 1250s. At that time, the Franciscans established a friary in Chełmno/Culm (1258), and the Dominicans in Toruń. On the other hand, in the nearby Gdańsk region of Pomerania, these orders established friaries with the participation of local princes in Nowe/Neuenburg on the Vistula (the Franciscans in 1282) and Tczew/Dirschau (the Dominicans in 1289). Shortly afterwards, the Franciscans gained one more friary, this time founded by the Bishop of Warmia, in Braniewo/Braunsberg, situated more to the east (1296).<sup>11</sup> Besides pastoral work in the city, just like the Dominicans in Gdańsk/Danzig before, its task was to carry out missionary activity in the east. At the beginning of the 14th century, the Franciscans of Braniewo/Braunsberg were involved in missionary activity in remote Sambia,<sup>12</sup> that is, in the territory of Livonia (nowadays southern Latvia), bordering on Samogitia to the south. It was the mendicant friary located furthest to the east in Prussia at that time. Additionally, starting from the year 1238, the Franciscans on the southern Baltic coast had a friary in Riga (1238), where the Dominicans had settled a few years earlier too (1234). The next foundations of mendicant friaries in Prussia took place in the 14th century. In 1349, the Franciscans established one in the small town of Welawa/Wehlau in the east of the country.<sup>13</sup> A dozen or so years later, another Franciscan friary was established in episcopal Warmia, in Barczewo/Wartenburg, in the south (1364).<sup>14</sup> At that time, a third great mendicant order appeared in the Teutonic State, the Augustinian Eremites.<sup>15</sup> As is known, it was established in 1256 by a decision of the Pope, who combined several smaller communities, and it was classified as a mendicant order only in the year 1303. The first Augustinian foundation was made in 1347 in the bishopric of Warmia, in Reszel/Rössel.<sup>16</sup> The second friary was built in the southwest of the Teutonic State, in Chojnice/Konitz (1356). Later, the Augustinians managed to establish two

<sup>10</sup> *Preußisches Urkundenbuch (PUB)*. Bd. I/1. Hrsg. von R. PHILIPPI, C. P. WOELKY. Königsberg, 1882, Nr. 84, S. 64-65. For information on the Dominicans' activity, see POWIERSKI, J. *Dzieje ziemi pasłęckiej do schyłku XIII w.* In *Pasłęk. Z dziejów miasta i okolic 1297-1997*. Red. J. WŁODARSKI. Pasłęk, 1997, rozdział 18: *Misja dominikańska w ziemi pasłęckiej a rywalizacja Krzyżaków z biskupem Chrystianem*, s. 162-168.

<sup>11</sup> ROTH, W. *Op. cit.*, S. 61-85, 126-143; NIEDERMEIER, H. *Die Franziskaner in Preussen, Livland und Litauen im Mittelalter. Zeitschrift für Ostforschung*, 1978, Jhg. 24, Hf. 1, S. 5-9.

<sup>12</sup> This is mentioned in the papal bull of Clement V of 19 July 1310: *PUB*. Bd. II. Hrsg. von M. HEIN, E. MASCHKE. Königsberg, 1939, Nr. 13, S. 8; NIEDERMEIER, H. *Op. cit.*, S. 8, 14.

<sup>13</sup> ROTH, W. *Op. cit.*, S. 144.

<sup>14</sup> *Codex diplomaticus Warmiensis oder Regesten und Urkunden zur Geschichte Ermlands (CDW)*. Bd. II. Hrsg. von C. P. WOELKY, J. M. SAAGE. Mainz, 1864, Nr. 368, S. 382.

<sup>15</sup> General data on the Augustinian foundation in this area was collected by KUNZELMANN, A. *Geschichte der deutschen Augustiner-Eremiten*. 5. Teil: *Die sächsisch-thüringische Provinz und die sächsische Reformkongregation bis zum Untergang der beiden*. Würzburg, 1974, S. 271-272, 276-282, 288-290, 300-305.

<sup>16</sup> POSCHMANN, A. *Das Augustinerkloster in Rössel. Zeitschrift für die Geschichte und Altertumskunde Ermlands*, 1932, Bd. 24, S. 83.

more friaries in Prussia. In 1372, a friary was established in Świętomiejsce/Heiligenbeil (now Russian Mamonovo), and the last foundation was around the year 1400, in the now non-existent village of Patollen (later the estate of Gross Waldeck, in Russian Ossokino).<sup>17</sup> A few years later, one more Dominican friary was founded in Prussia, in the town of Nordenbork/Nordenburg (now Russian Krylovo) in the east (in 1407 it received considerable financial support from the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order). At the end of the 14th century, the only friary in the country belonging to the Carmelite mendicant order was established. It was built in the Young City Gdańsk/Danzig, perhaps soon after the urban centre was established (1380). The papal confirmation of this foundation took place in 1399.<sup>18</sup> In the first half of the 15th century, another Franciscan friary was founded there. This time located inside the settlement complex of medieval Gdańsk/Danzig, the friary was situated in what was called the Suburb (1419). This list of foundations of mendicant friaries in the Teutonic State should be supplemented with friaries established in the second half of the 15th century. The Franciscan Observants were particularly active in that area at that time. In 1477, they settled in the suburb of Welawa/Wehlau, when the friary of Conventual Franciscans in the city stood empty. The latter, however, returned to the city, which resulted in two friaries of different branches of the Franciscan movement operating there for some time. In 1500, at the demand of the Archbishop of Riga, the Observants were moved to Królewiec/Königsberg.<sup>19</sup> This, however, took place only in 1520.<sup>20</sup> A second house of Observants was established in 1480, in the town of Zalewo/Saalfeld.<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, in 1502, Observants were settled by the Bishop of Chełmno in Lubawa/Löbau, lying outside Teutonic Prussia at that time.<sup>22</sup> The last foundation was in Tylża/Tilsit (now Russian Sovetsk), where a friary was built in 1515 and 1516. Throughout the entire period of the existence of the Teutonic State, the Dominicans had, in total, six friaries in the region, the Conventual Franciscans seven, the Franciscan Observants four, the Augustinians four and the Carmelites one; whereby after 1466, only one Dominican friary (Gierdawy/Gerdauen, now Russian Zheleznodorozhny), two Augustinian friaries, one friary of Conventual Franciscans and four new houses of Franciscan Observants were established within the borders of the Teutonic State.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *Das Marienburger Tresslerbuch der Jahre 1399-1409*. Hrsg. von E. JOACHIM. Königsberg, 1896, S. 83, 97, 199.

<sup>18</sup> TRAJDOS, T. M. *U zarania karmelitów w Polsce*. Warszawa, 1993, s. 16, 24-25.

<sup>19</sup> *Urkundenbuch des alten sächsischen Franziskanerprovinzen (USF)*. Th. I: *Die Observantenkustodie Livland und Preussen*. Hrsg. von L. LEMMENS. Düsseldorf, 1913, Nr. 134, S. 36-37; ROTH, W. Op. cit., S. 145; BISKUP, M. *Średniowieczna sieć klasztorów w państwie zakonu krzyżackiego w Prusach (do 1525 r.)*. *Zapiski Historyczne*, 1999, t. 64, z. 1, s. 59.

<sup>20</sup> *Spuren franziskanischer Geschichte. Chronologischer Abriß der Geschichte der Sächsischen Franziskanerprovinzen von ihren Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart* (Saxonia Franciscana, Sonderband). Bearb. von B. SCHMIES, K. RAKEMANN, hrsg. von D. BERG. Werl, 1999, S. 251.

<sup>21</sup> *USF*, Th. I, Nr. 113, S. 33.

<sup>22</sup> *Diecezja chełmińska. Zarys historyczno-statystyczny*. Pelplin, 1928, s. 443.

<sup>23</sup> The mendicant friary network in the Teutonic State and Lithuania in the late 15th and early 16th century is presented on the map.



The conditions which they faced while conducting their activities were very diverse. Besides the friaries established in the large urban centres in the country, many friaries were located in small provincial towns, particularly in the east of the country (Barczewo/Wartenburg, Reszel/Rössel, Gierdawy/Gerdauen, Welawa/Wehlau and Tylża/Tilsit). For this reason, creating permanent foundations for the activities of friars in the urban environment became very important.<sup>24</sup> However, this stability, in the case of mendicants, except Augustinians, was not connected with having a regular income and landed properties to ensure the peaceful existence of the friaries. The establishment of permanent ties with the local environment was of the utmost importance. Not only was procuring financial support for the friary from the local bourgeoisie and rural communities the task of the first generation of friars working in a friary, but also the creation of favourable conditions for recruiting candidates for the order who would continue the work in the future. Only then could friars integrate closely with the local community, from which new friars originated and with which they necessarily kept close contacts, also as family members. These tasks

<sup>24</sup> KUBICKI, R. Fundacja..., s. 67-88.

were much more difficult to carry out in the case of friaries situated in the towns. They could count on support neither from the local bourgeoisie nor in rural areas where the settlement network was not fully formed. The best evidence of problems which it generated is the case of the Dominicans of Nordenbork/Nordenburg, a small town in the east of the country, where the neighbouring regions were not yet fully populated. The friars could not find proper support from the people there, which was mentioned by the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, Paul von Rusdorf, in a document. He was informed about this personally by Prior Nicolas Dobtmer. The Dominican prior complained that: *he and his congregation cannot survive in this empty land* (German *Wiltnisse*).<sup>25</sup> Because of this, at the request of the Dominicans, a decision was made in 1428 to move the friary to Gierdawy/Gerdauen,<sup>26</sup> more to the west, which was finally approved by the decision of Paul von Rusdorf on 22 July<sup>27</sup>. On the other hand, cases of unsuccessful attempts to establish Franciscan friaries in Ragneta/Ragnit and Augustinian ones in Klaipėda/Memel are a testimony to other difficulties in founding friaries on the eastern frontier of the country.<sup>28</sup> In 1409, after Easter, Grand Master Ulrich von Jungingen granted land for the construction of new friaries there. Presumably, the choice of places located right on the border with newly annexed Samogitia was not accidental. These friaries were supposed to be missions, operating in nearby Samogitia. However, the outbreak of a new uprising in Samogitia on 30 May 1409, and the subsequent defeat of the Order by Poland and Lithuania, made all these plans impossible.<sup>29</sup> Originally, these plans were even larger in scope. The Teutonic Knights wanted to build a Dominican friary in Lithuania. A sign of these plans is a preserved draft of a letter by Konrad von Jungingen, the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, written on 17 February 1400 in Sztum/Stuhm, and probably addressed to Grand Duke Vytautas. The Grand Master touched on the problem of the contemplated foundation of a new friary on the prince's land. The friary was supposed to be established with the participation of Dominicans from the Prussian contrata, that is, a unit belonging to the Polish province of the Order, including the territory of the Teutonic State.<sup>30</sup> Not long afterwards, on 9 January 1401, in Malbork/

<sup>25</sup> „bruder herre Nicclos Dobtmer, der sich gefach vor uns und unsern mitgebütigern swerlichin und ernstlichin (!) beclagte, das her sich mit seyner samelunge doselbist in der wiltnisse mit nichte enthalnden mochten“: *CDW*. Bd. IV. Hrsg. von V. RÖHRICH, F. LIEDTKE, H. SCHMAUCH. Braunsberg, 1935, Nr. 242, S. 276.

<sup>26</sup> *CDW*, Bd. IV, Nr. 233, S. 267-268.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, Nr. 242, S. 275-277.

<sup>28</sup> „Anno 1409 statim post pasce Ulricus magister cum aliquibus preceptoribus [...] dedit locum Augustinensibus in Memela; nobis vero, fratribus minoribus, in Ragnit; sed guerra interveniente nihil pro tunc est factum“: *Franciscani Thorunensis Annales Prussici (941-1410)*. In *Scriptores rerum Prussicarum (SRP)*. Bd. III. Hrsg. von T. HIRSCH, M. TÖPPEN, E. STREHLKE. Leipzig, 1866, S. 298; LEMMENS, L. *Aus der Geschichte der deutschen Franziskaner im Ordenslande Preußen. Mitteilungen des Copernicus-Vereins für Wissenschaft und Kunst zu Thorn*, 1912, Hf. 20, S. 62; ROTH, W. *Op. cit.*, S. 103; NIEDERMEIER, H. *Op. cit.*, S. 15.

<sup>29</sup> RADOCH, M. *Walki Zakonu Krzyżackiego o Żmudź od połowy XIII wieku do 1411 roku*. Olsztyn, 2011, s. 270-275.

<sup>30</sup> *Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin-Dahlem (GStAPK)*, XX. HA, Ordensbriefarchiv Nr. 598. This letter was not published in *Codex epistolaris Vitoldi magni ducis Lithuaniae 1376-1430* (*Monumenta medii aevi historica res gestas Poloniae illustrantia*, t. 6). Coll. A PROCHASKA. Cracoviae, 1882, p. 66-67.

Marienburg, the christening of the most distinguished 80 boyars from Samogitia took place. What is important is that they set out on their return journey to Samogitia with several priests and monks who were to christen their wives and children when they arrived.<sup>31</sup> There can be no doubt that there were also mendicants among them, probably Dominicans, Franciscans and Augustinians. These actions could not succeed, however, due to the outbreak of an uprising in Samogitia after 13 March 1401, which after all was supported by Grand Duke Vytautas.<sup>32</sup> Mendicants resumed their activities after the Teutonic Knights had regained control over Samogitia in August 1405.<sup>33</sup> Some indirect evidence of the friars' activity is the fact that a payment for a friar who conducted pastoral activity in Samogitia for the whole year was recorded in the expenses of the Grand Master's treasury on 29 September 1406.<sup>34</sup>

## 2. The role of mendicants in Christianisation and pastoral activity

As has already been mentioned, the mendicant orders (Dominicans and Franciscans) in the Teutonic State were pioneers in building Church structures. Some interesting information about their role in the earliest period can be found in the preamble of the foundation document of the Dominican friary in Elbląg/Elbing of 13 January 1239.<sup>35</sup> Herman Balk, the Provincial *Master* of the Teutonic Order in Prussia, while recalling the reasons for the foundation, made the following remark:

Therefore, we declare with this document that in order to protect the souls threatened with numerous possible hazards born mostly in the newly settled countries, where those who most often escape from honest life and avoid disclosure hide, with the complete will of our chapter, we hereby grant a place in our newly settled city of Elbląg to the honourable order, which is referred to as predicatory and indeed is acknowledged to be such, to the brothers, namely the prior and the friars [literally 'master and people'] beloved and effective both in their actions and in words, where they can construct their friary.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>31</sup> POSILGE, J. von. *Chronik des Landes Preussens*. In *SRP*, Bd. III, S. 240; RADOCH, M. Op. cit., s. 170.

<sup>32</sup> RADOCH, M. Op. cit., s. 175.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 210-213.

<sup>34</sup> „item 2 m. eyne monche gegeben, der zu Samaythen gewest was eyn ganz yar“: *Das Marienburger Tresslerbuch...*, S. 407.

<sup>35</sup> The foundation document of the friary, dated 13 January 1238, was issued by the Grand Master of Prussia and Livonia, Herman Balk. Jan Powierski, based on an analysis of Balk's itinerary, remarked that this document was dated according to the Annunciation style: therefore, it was actually issued in January 1239, see POWIERSKI, J. Początek walk Krzyżaków o panowanie nad Zalewem Wiślany i założenie Elbląga. *Nautologia*, 1993, r. 28, nr. 3, s. 19-21.

<sup>36</sup> „[...] Ea propter presencium testimonio protestamur quod cavere volentes in quantum possumus periculum animarum quod in novellis terrarum plantacionibus fit plerumque ubi latitant a vivendi rectitudine fugitivi noticiam devitantes de capituli nostri plenaria voluntate ordini venerando qui dicitur predi-



Thus, in the first place, the Dominicans were to conduct pastoral work for the urban population. The reason was to care for the spiritual life of the settlers arriving in the city in great numbers. Also, in the document of 14 April 1246, which confirmed this foundation, the Grand Master Heinrich von Hohenlohe mentioned the activity of the Dominicans in Prussia and Livonia (Lyvonja).<sup>37</sup> However, the mendicants' activity was limited not just to Germanic people arriving from the west and the Slavic (Kaschubian-Pomeranian and Polish) people inhabiting the eastern and southern part of the country. It also included the native Prussian population. Unfortunately, there is no detailed information about the education of monks in the Prussian language and their preaching in it.<sup>38</sup> On the other hand, in the case of the Dominicans, there is evidence of giving sermons in German and Polish (Gdańsk/Danzig, Toruń/Thorn).<sup>39</sup> Of course, contact with the Prussian population was established due to the fact that it had migrated to the cities (mostly to the suburbs of the cities), where it assimilated with the predominant German society<sup>40</sup> Candidates for the order recruited by individual friaries originated from this group too. From better-preserved sources dealing with the Dominicans in Elbląg/Elbing, it is known that the friary consisted of brothers from the native Prussian population, among others. This is indicated by their surnames, as in the case of Martin Munter (1458), who had a patronymic derived from the Prussian name Muntir.<sup>41</sup> In the case of Jacob Revosze of Rabuza<sup>42</sup> (Rawusen, Raus, Rawos), a Prussian village (in the field of Raus), and Bartholomew Ruscheyszen from the village of Ruszaynen (German Russchenhain),<sup>43</sup> we are dealing with origins in places which were known to have been inhabited by the Prussian population. A similar situation may refer to the case of Peter Zugelia (1458), a monk descending from an originally Prussian family, which probably assimilated with German culture in the

catorum et esse dinoscitur ab effectu, fratrum videlicet domino et hominibus dilectorum potentiumque in opere et sermone in civitate nostra plantacionis novelle Elbinc dicta contulimus aream quondam in qua edificet claustrum suum [...]: CDW, Bd. I. Hrsg. von C. P. WOELKY, J. M. SAAGE. Mainz, 1860, Nr. 1, S. 1 For the general context of foundations of friaries in the Teutonic State, see OLIŃSKI, P. Motywy fundacji klasztorów przez zakon krzyżacki w Prusach w świetle dokumentów fundacyjnych (ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem dokumentów fundacyjnych żeńskiego klasztoru benedyktyńskiego w Królewcu i klasztoru augustianów-eremitów w Chojnicach). In *Kancelarie krzyżackie. Stan badań i perspektywy badawcze*. Red. J. TRUPINDA. Malbork, 2002, s. 191-207.

<sup>37</sup> „De quorum laboribus et predicacionibus germinare fructus uberes cepit prusia et rigata lyvonja messis habundancia iocundari.”: CDW, Bd. I, Nr. 14, S. 22

<sup>38</sup> For information on the diocesan clergy, see RADZIMIŃSKI, A. *Chryścianizacja...*, s. 28-34.

<sup>39</sup> KUBICKI, R. *Środowisko dominikanów kontraty pruskiej od XIII do połowy XVI wieku*. Gdańsk, 2007, s. 201-202.

<sup>40</sup> The problem of Prussian assimilation is discussed by VERCAMER, G. Der Übergang der prußischen Stammeseliten in die Schicht der ‚Freien‘ unter der Herrschaft des Deutschen Ordens und der Kulturtransfer von der ‚deutschen‘ auf die prußische Kultur. In *Mittelalterliche Eliten und Kulturtransfer östlich der Elbe. Interdisziplinäre Beiträge zu Archäologie und Geschichte im mittelalterlichen Ostmitteleuropa*. Hrsg. von A. KLAMMT, S. ROSSIGNOL. Göttingen, 2009, S. 169-191.

<sup>41</sup> TRAUTMANN, R. *Die altpreußischen Personennamen*. Göttingen, 1974, S. 63.

<sup>42</sup> CDW, Bd. I, Nr. 125, S. 221-223 (1304) *campus Raus*; CDW, Bd. I, Nr. 171, S. 297 (1314) *campus Rawos*; cf. POLLAKÓWNA, M. *Osadnictwo Warmii w okresie krzyżackim*. Poznań, 1953, s. 37, 82, 133.

<sup>43</sup> POLLAKÓWNA, M. Op. cit., s. 151.

15th century, who may have been born in the Sambian village of Suggelaw,<sup>44</sup> that is, an area with large clusters of native Prussian populations.

Obviously, the presence of brothers in mendicant friaries descending from the local Prussian population and knowing Prussian was of primary importance for preaching. This concerned particularly situations in which the area of their pastoral activities covered the lands inhabited by dense groups of Prussian populations. As is shown by very general estimates, the ratio of Prussians to Germans in the western commanderies was 3:5, in the Bishopric of Warmia, in the northern part, Prussians constituted 50% of the population, and in the southern part 75%. In the eastern commanderies, the number of Prussians rises to 90% in the region of Natangia, reaching almost 100% in Sambia.<sup>45</sup> For this reason, a knowledge of Prussian by friars was the most important issue in the case of the Dominicans of Elbląg/Elbing and Gierdawy/Gerdauen, the Augustinians of Świątomyjsce/Heiligenbeil and Patollen, and the Franciscans of Barczewo/Wartenburg, Reszel/Rössel and Welawa/Wehlau.

An interesting piece of evidence of Dominicans knowing Prussian is included in the testimony of a witness in a Warsaw-Uniejów trial in 1339. The Dominican, Nicolas, testifying during the trial, who was also a lector at the friary in Chełmno/Culm and prior at Elbląg/Elbing, recalling the destruction of the friary in Sieradz by the Teutonic Knights, mentioned that he had asked the Elbląg/Elbing commander to spare the city and friary. The commander replied to his requests in Prussian '*ne prest'*, which means 'I do not understand'. It is obvious that Nicolas could translate the meaning of these words from Prussian. He probably spoke to Commander Hermann von Oettingen in German, who used a Prussian phrase, wishing to avoid a conversation. In any case, this could indicate a certain knowledge of Prussian by the Dominicans in Elbląg/Elbing, where Nicolas had resided earlier.<sup>46</sup> The case of Simon Grunau, a Dominican, the author of the Prussian Chronicle, is similar. During a journey through the district, he reportedly arrived in a village where, by accident, he ran into a numerous Prussian congregation in one of the houses. They were listening to teachings preached in Prussian by an old peasant who was their bard (in German *Waidelotte*). Initially, they wanted to kill the friar, but he implored the bard to spare his life, addressing him in Prussian, of which, as he confessed, he knew a little (*ich kundt ein wenigk Preusch*).<sup>47</sup> This case describes only one of

<sup>44</sup> GERULLIS, G. *Die altpreußischen Ortsnamen*. Berlin, 1922, S. 176.

<sup>45</sup> HARMJANZ, H. *Volkskunde und Siedlungsgeschichte Altpreussen*. 2. Aufl. Berlin, 1943, S. 32; BISKUP, M. Das Problem der ethnischen Zugehörigkeit im mittelalterlichen Landesausbau in Preussen. Zum Stand der Forschung. *Jahrbuch für die Geschichte Mittel- und Ostdeutschlands*, 1991, Bd. 40, S. 3-25.

<sup>46</sup> The entire content of the testimony was cited and discussed in detail by BIENIAK, J. Udział duchowieństwa zakonnego w procesie warszawsko-uniejowskim w 1339 r. In *Klasztor w kulturze średniowiecznej Polski*. Red. A. POBÓG-LENARTOWICZ, M. DERWICH. Opole, 1995, s. 486-487.

<sup>47</sup> „Ich qwam in ein haus eines dorffes und fandt in der stuben viel mennir und frauen, welche in Preuschir sproche predigte ein alter pauer ir waidlott. Sie entpfingen mich ein iglicher mit seinem messer mich zu todten, so gebrach es ag am waidlotten, und er sprach ein wort. Den gobin gottis ich is dancke, und ich kundt ein wenigk Preusch, mit welchin ich bat umb mein leben, ich wolt thun, was sie wolten. Und sie

many encounters between monks and the Prussian population, which were probably very frequent during journeys by members of particular friaries through their districts. Indirect evidence of the scale of this phenomenon includes surviving permits to collect alms (in German *Bettelbrief* or *Termineibrief*), which were issued to individual friaries by the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries, mainly in Sambia. This was presumably combined with some form of preaching for the local population. These activities were conducted by the Dominicans of both Elbląg/Elbing and Gierdawy/Gerdauen, the Augustinian Eremites of Reszel/Rössel, Patollen<sup>48</sup> and Świętomiejsce/Heiligenbeil, the Franciscans of Braniewo/Braunsberg and Welawa/Wehlau, the Franciscan Observants of Welawa/Wehlau and Tylża/Tilsit, and even the Antonians of Frombork/Frauenburg and the Holy Spirit friars of Prabuty/Riesenburg.<sup>49</sup> This was of special significance to the territory of the Królewiec/Königsberg commandery and Sambia, where the parochial network was little developed, and did not, in fact, satisfy the needs of the area inhabited mostly by a Prussian population.<sup>50</sup>

The pastoral impact on the district's population at times assumed a more formal character. It included acceptance into the community of the friary, and admission to participate in any spiritual event resulting from the order's prayers (the following formula was used in the documents: *participationem omnium bonorum*).<sup>51</sup> Such documents were issued by particular congregations for guilds and religious brotherhoods consisting of craftsmen. For instance, in 1433 the Franciscans of Welawa did so for the bakers' guild of Kętrzyn/Rastenburg.<sup>52</sup> Numerous bequests received by mendicants are also evidence of mendicants' pastoral activity.<sup>53</sup> The rank of friary churches was determined by the indulgence privileges held by a particular congregation<sup>54</sup> and the relics kept there, as well as holy paintings treated with particular admiration. This was

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hörten von mir ire sprache, sie wurden irfreet und schrigen alle sta nossen rickie, nossen rickie, und muste ein eit schweren im namen Perkuno des gottis, und ich is nit wult dem bischoff sogen, der ir herre war, und ich schwur und hilffe mit waidelen.“: GRUNAU, Simon. *Preussische Chronik*. Bd. I. Hrsg. von M. PERLBACH. Leipzig, 1876, S. 91. For a detailed discussion of this event see ZONENBERG, S. *Kronika Szymona Grunaua*. Bydgoszcz, 2009, s. 26-27.

<sup>48</sup> GUTTZEIT, E. J. Das Kloster Patollen (zur heiligen Dreifaltigkeit) innerhalb der Geschichte des Rittergutes Gross Waldeck, Kreis Pr. Eylau. In *Studien zur Geschichte des Preussenlandes. Festschrift für Erich Keyser zu seinem 70. Geburtstag dargebracht von Freunden und Schülern*. Hrsg. von E. BAHR. Marburg, 1963, S. 202-203.

<sup>49</sup> GRUNAU, S. Op. cit., Bd. I, S. 389-390.

<sup>50</sup> About the catastrophic condition of the parochial network, see BISKUP, M. Bemerkung..., S. 45-48; VERCAMER, G. *Siedlungs-, Sozial- und Verwaltungsgeschichte der Komturei Königsberg in Preußen (13.-16. Jahrhundert)* (Einzelschriften der Historischen Kommission für Ost- und Westpreußische Landesforschung, Bd. 29). Marburg, 2010, S. 373; VERCAMER, G. Der Übergang..., S. 187.

<sup>51</sup> For information on this practice, see KUBICKI, R. *Participationem omnium bonorum - forma i znaczenie przyjęcia do udziału w dobrach duchowych zakonu na przykładzie mendykantów w Państwie Zakonu Krzyżackiego w Prusach*. *Nasza Przyszłość*, 2009, t. 112, s. 55-86.

<sup>52</sup> *CDW*, Bd. IV, Nr. 463, S. 493-495.

<sup>53</sup> GUTTZEIT, E. J. Op. cit., S. 200; KUBICKI, R. Sources for the history of mendicant economy in Royal Prussia from the 15<sup>th</sup> till the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> c. *Hereditas Monasteriorum*, 2013, no. 3, pp. 60-61.

<sup>54</sup> About indulgence documents (indulgences) possessed by mendicants in the Teutonic State, see KUBICKI, R. *Podstawy ekonomiczne funkcjonowania mendykantów w państwie krzyżackim i Prusach*

also the case with the friary church of the Augustinians in Patollen, which was a site of pilgrimage owing to the icon of the Virgin from the church in Georgenau (Jergenau) which was kept there.<sup>55</sup> Another valuable relic of the True Cross was held by the Augustinian church in Chojnice/Konitz. In 1384, Bodzanta (Bodzeta), the Archbishop of Gniezno, issued an indulgence letter (he established a 40-day indulgence) which encouraged pilgrims to visit the church.<sup>56</sup> Burials in friary churches were reserved for local knights, who made appropriate bequests and endowed chapels and altars. This was the case with the Dominicans of Gierdawy/Gerdauen (1477) and the Augustinians of Patollen (1483–1484).<sup>57</sup> There is a case of an Augustinian monk from Patollen who in 1508 became parish priest in a parish beyond the deep (*hinder dem Tyeffe*), probably meaning Piława (German Pillau, Russian Baltiysk), because the people there could not afford a diocesan priest due to a lack of means. Perhaps it had something to do with the tradition of collecting alms by this friary in the district including the Vistula Spit.<sup>58</sup>

Mendicant activity was not limited only to pastoral work as such; it was also related to education. Libraries existed in all friaries.<sup>59</sup> Candidates for the order, even lay members, were also educated there.<sup>60</sup> What is interesting is that this type of activity by friars went beyond the premises of the friary. This is evidenced by remarks on the beginning of education made in his recollections by a member of the Carthusian Order, Dominic of Prussia (1384–1460), who was born in a small fishing village probably between Gdańsk/Danzig and Elbląg/Elbing. He recalled that he had received his first teachings at the age of 11 (in 1395) from an old Dominican who lived a solitary life at the consent of the provincial of his order. The boy learnt the alphabet and the first prayers from him, and when the friar noticed his great skills, he advised the mother to send him to a school in the city to further his education.<sup>61</sup>

To recapitulate the above comments, the process of institutionalisation and the role of mendicant orders in pastoral activity conducted in the Teutonic State differed from the model which these congregations encountered in Western Europe. In

Królewskich do połowy XVI w. In *Inter oeconomiam coelestem et terrenam mendykanci a zagadnienia ekonomiczne*. Red. W. DŁUGOŁĘCKI, T. GAŁUSZKA, R. KUBICKI, A. ZAJCHOWSKA. Kraków, 2011, s. 210-214.

<sup>55</sup> EYSENBLÄTTER, H. Die Klöster der Augustiner Eremiten im Nordosten Deutschlands. *Altpreußische Monatsschrift*, 1898, Bd. 35, S. 386. About relics and pilgrimage sites in that part of the Teutonic State in Prussia, see ROZYŃKOWSKI, W. *Omnes Sancti et Sanctae Dei. Studium nad kultem świętych w diecezjach pruskich państwa zakonu krzyżackiego*. Malbork, 2006, s. 189-228.

<sup>56</sup> KUBICKI, R. *Podstawy...*, s. 214.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 221.

<sup>58</sup> „dy pharr hinder dem Tyeffe nach dem sy ein weltlichen prister aws armut nicht vormucht zuhalten gegeben“: *GStAPK*, XX. HA, Ordensfoliant Nr. 29, S. 127; GUTTZEIT, E. J. Op. cit., S. 205.

<sup>59</sup> MENTZEL-REUTERS, A. *Arma spiritualia. Bibliotheken, Bücher und Bildung im Deutschen Orden* (Beiträge zum Buch- und Bibliothekswesen, 47). Wiesbaden, 2003; KUBICKI, R. *Die Rolle der Bettelorden...*, S. 89-90.

<sup>60</sup> The best-confirmed sources of this are available in the case of the Dominicans, see KUBICKI, R. *Środowisko dominikanów...*, s. 85-105.

<sup>61</sup> TRILLER, A. Jugenderinnerungen an die Heimat im Werke des Kartäusers Dominikus von Preußen (1384-1460). *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte und Altertumskunde Ermlands*, 1967/68, Bd. 31/32, S. 44.

the first period, the Dominicans and Franciscans conducted active missionary work among the population of newly established cities, and gradually marked out districts. With time, when the stabilisation of the first congregations took place, friaries of particular congregations were built, first by the Dominicans, then by the Franciscans, Augustinians and Carmelites. The last were built for the Franciscan Observants. The mendicants were concerned not only with the Slavic and German populations, but also with the native Prussian people. Friars encountered these both in the suburbs of cities where they gradually assimilated into the predominant German ethnic group, and in the districts under their control. There, monks, who were themselves frequently descended from the Prussian population, collected donations for friaries, probably also preaching at the same time in Prussian. In a situation where the parish network was insufficient in providing proper spiritual care for the local Prussian population, which can be seen particularly in the case of Sambia, only friars could attempt to improve the conditions for spiritual care over the Prussian population. The testimony of Simon Grunau quoted above indicates that even at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries, the desired effects in this regard were not achieved. This does not influence the general opinion that mendicants were a highly important factor within the framework of pastoral activity conducted by Church structures in the Teutonic State in medieval Prussia.

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## PASTABOS DĖL ELGETAUJANČIŲJŲ ORDINŲ INSTITUCIONALIZACIJOS IR JŲ VAIDMENS PASTORALINĖJE VEIKLOJE: DOMINIKONŲ VOKIEČIŲ ORDINO VALDOSE PRŪSIJOJE ATVEJIS (XIII A. – XVI A. PRADŽIA)

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### Santrauka

Straipsnyje aptariamos bendrosios elgetaujančiųjų ordinų vienuolių institucionalizacijos Vokiečių ordino valdose Prūsijoje sąlygos ir jų pastoralinė veikla, orientuota į tiriamo regiono vietinius gyventojus. Ypatingas dėmesys kreipiamas į vienuolių kontaktus su rytinėje šalies dalyje gyvenusiais čiabuviais prūsais. Minėtas institucionalizacijos procesas šiose valdose, lyginant su Vakarų Europa, vyko visai kitomis sąlygomis. Naujai užkariautos Prūsijos žemės tuoj po Vokiečių ordino įsitvirtinimo jose tapo intensyvaus apgyvendinimo vieta. Nuo pat pradžių ne tik buvo statomos kariniu požiūriu svarbios pilys, bet ir buvo kuriami ištisi miestai. Šiomis sąlygomis vykęs pirmųjų dominikonų ir pranciškonų vienuolių kūrimasis šiose žemėse nepapildė jau egzistuojančio parapinio tinklo. Vietoj to tas kūrimasis pagonių apgyvendintoje srityje dominikonams ir pranciškonams buvo paženklintas misijų veiklos tikslų ir turėjo atlikti naujai formuojamos diecezijų (vyskupijų ir parapijų) struktūros palaikomąją funkciją.

Pirminiu laikotarpiu dominikonai ir pranciškonai vykdė aktyvią misijų veiklą tik tarp naujai sukurtų miestų ir pamažu susiformavusių komtūrijų gyventojų. Laikui bėgant, kai pirmosios kongregacijos stabilizavosi, buvo pastatyti konkrečių kongregacijų vienuolynai, pirmiausia dominikonų, tada pranciškonų, augustijonų ir karmelitų. Paskiausiai buvo pastatyti vienuolynai pranciškonams observantams. Per visą Vokiečių ordino valdų Prūsijoje egzistavimo laikotarpį dominikonams šiame regione priklausė iš viso šeši vienuolynai, pranciškonams konventualams – septyni, pranciškonams observantams – keturi, augustijonams – keturi, karmelitams – vienas. Po 1466 m. ten tebuvo įsteigtas vienas dominikonų, du augustijonų, vienas pranciškonų konventualų ir keturi nauji pranciškonų observantų vienuolynai.

Sąlygos, su kuriomis vienuoliams teko susidurti pastoracinėje veikloje, buvo labai skirtingos. Be vienuolynų, įsteigtų stambiausiuose šalies miestuose, daug jų veikė mažuose provincijos miesteliuose, ypač išsidėsčiusiuose rytinėje šalies dalyje: Vartenburge, Rėšliuje, Girdavoje, Vėluvoje ir Tilžėje. Dėl šios priežasties nuolatinių fundacijų kūrimas vienuolių veiklai miestų aplinkoje tapo itin svarbus. Vis dėlto fundacijų kuriamas stabilumas elgetaujančių vienuolių ordinų atveju, išskyrus augustijonus, nebuvo susijęs su nuolatinėmis pajamomis ir žemės nuosavybe, kurios galėjo užtikrinti taikų vienuolynų gyvavimą. Todėl didelę svarbą turėjo nuolatinių ryšių su vietine aplinka užmezgimas. Pirmosios vienuolynuose dirbusių vienuolių kartos uždavinys buvo ne tik parūpinti finansinę paramą vienuolynui iš vietinių miestiečių ir kaimų bendruomenių, bet ir sukurti palankias sąlygas priimti naujus narius į vienuolių ordinus, idant ateityje jie galėtų tęsti savo veiklą. Tik tokiu atveju vienuolynai galėjo glaudžiai integruotis į vietines bendruomenes, iš kurių vienuoliai kildindavosi ir su kuriomis jie palaikydavo glaudžius ryšius, įskaitant šeimyninius. Tokius uždavinius buvo gerokai sunkiau įgyvendinti vienuolynuose, įsikūrusiuose mažuose miesteliuose.



Juose būta maža galimybių kliautis tiek vietiniais miestelėnais, tiek gyventojais kaimiškųjų vietovių, kurių tinklas nebuvo galutinai suformuotas.

Elgetaujančiųjų ordinų vienuolių veikla neapsiribojo vien iš vakarų atvykstančiais germanų kilmės atvykėliais ar rytinę ir pietinę šalies sritis apgyvenusiais slavų kilmės (kašubų, pamariečių ir lenkų) gyventojais. Ji apėmė ir vietinius prūsus. Suprantama, kontaktai su prūsais mezgėsi pirmiausia tais atvejais, kai jie migruodavo į miestus ar jų priemiesčius, kur asimiliuodavosi su dominuojančia vokiškąja visuomene. Tačiau vienuoliai susidurdavo su čiabuviais ir jų kontroliuotose komtūrijose. Ten vienuoliai, kurie dažnai patys buvo kilę iš vietinių prūsų, rinkdavo vienuolynams aukas, tuo pačiu metu, tikėtina, ir pamokslaudami prūsų kalba. Deja, detalios informacijos apie vienuolių mokymą ir pamokslus prūsų kalba nėra. Antra vertus, dominikonų atveju esama liudijimų apie bažnytinių pamokslų sakymą vokiečių ir lenkų kalbomis (Dancige, Torunėje). Akivaizdu, kad tokiam pamokslavimui didžiausios svarbos turėjo iš prūsų gyventojų besikildinančių brolių, mokėjusių prūsų kalbą, egzistavimas elgetaujančių ordinų vienuolių gretose. Tai ypač lietė situacijas, kai jų pastoracinės veiklos sritis apimdavo žemes, tankiai apgyvendintas prūsų.

Esant tokiai padėčiai, kai parapijų tinklas buvo nepakankamas tinkamam vietinių prūsų dvasiniam ugdymui, o tai ypač pasakytina apie Sambijos atvejį, tik elgetaujančių ordinų vienuoliai galėjo bandyti pagerinti čiabuvių dvasinės priežiūros sąlygas.